

Washington, D.C. -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) has won approval from the House of \$850,000 in federal funding for area health and education programs. The House Fiscal Year 2010 "Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act" (H.R. 3293) that passed the House today includes \$850,000 Buchanan requested to improve health care and educational opportunities in Florida's 13th Congressional District.

The bill includes \$150,000 Buchanan requested to support efforts to expand the Child Advocacy Center in Sarasota.

"The center's current facility limits their ability to provide services vital to the health and safety of abused children," noted Buchanan. "This funding will help boost their efforts to build a new center that will allow them to expand their counseling program and provide additional medical services to abused children."

"Congressman Buchanan is a true champion of protecting Florida's children," said Dr. Hal H. Hedley, President and CEO of the Child Protection Center. "Families are stressed and the incidence of child abuse is reaching epidemic numbers. These funds will provide abused children with treatment, intervention, and help prevent child abuse."

Buchanan also secured \$350,000 on behalf of Sarasota County for the construction of a new health facility in Englewood.

The Congressman said, "This facility will improve access to health care and a variety of human and social services programs for area residents of both Sarasota and Charlotte counties."

"We are extremely grateful for Congressman Buchanan's advocacy on our behalf to draw down federal funding for projects so important to the community", said Jon Thaxton, Sarasota County Commission Chair. "The Englewood Wellness Center will greatly improve access to health, human and social services for the residents of southern Sarasota County as well as Charlotte County. This is very much needed as in times of economic stress the demand for these serves goes up."

Buchanan also secured \$250,000 to help address nursing shortages by supporting educational development at the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee Campus.

“Critical nursing shortages continue to grow as our population ages,” said Buchanan. “The University is preparing to establish a College of Nursing on campus that will allow them to reach and educate the southern-most portions of Florida.”

The federal funding will support the development of a teaching simulation laboratory, equipping a videoconference classroom, and the development of web, on-site, and blended courses at the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee Campus.

“We are delighted at this point in our separate accreditation process to get additional support for the College of Nursing, as this continues to be a strong workforce issue in the state of Florida,” said USF Sarasota-Manatee President Dr. Arthur Guilford. “This will enable us to expand nursing opportunities to include even more coursework in south Sarasota County and help us to educate more nurses in our region.”

Finally, the bill includes \$100,000 Buchanan requested to help New College of Florida engage and enhance the digital assets at the Jane Bancroft Cook Library, a joint-use facility for New College of Florida, the University of South Florida Sarasota/Manatee, State College of Florida, and residents of Manatee and Sarasota counties.

“Libraries are no longer about books and card catalogs,” said Buchanan. “This funding will help the Jane Bancroft Cook Library become a center for community research and civic engagement.”

New College of Florida President Gordon E. Michalson said, “This gratifying enhancement of the Smart Library will underwrite our capacity to stay current with the rapidly changing technologies affecting college and university libraries. Moreover, this support affects not simply New College and neighboring institutions, but the entire region of Southwest Florida in ways that will benefit citizens of the state for years to come.”